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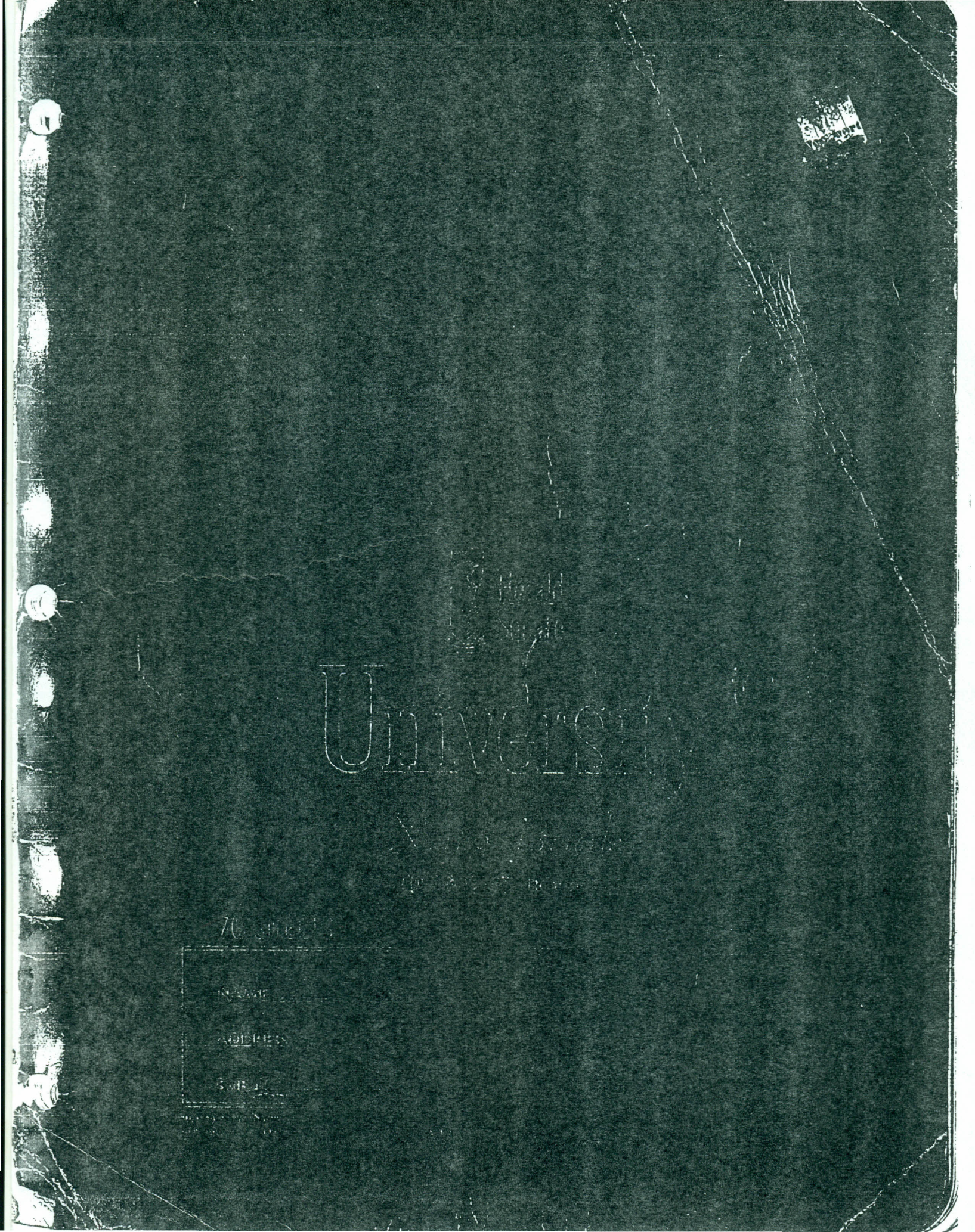
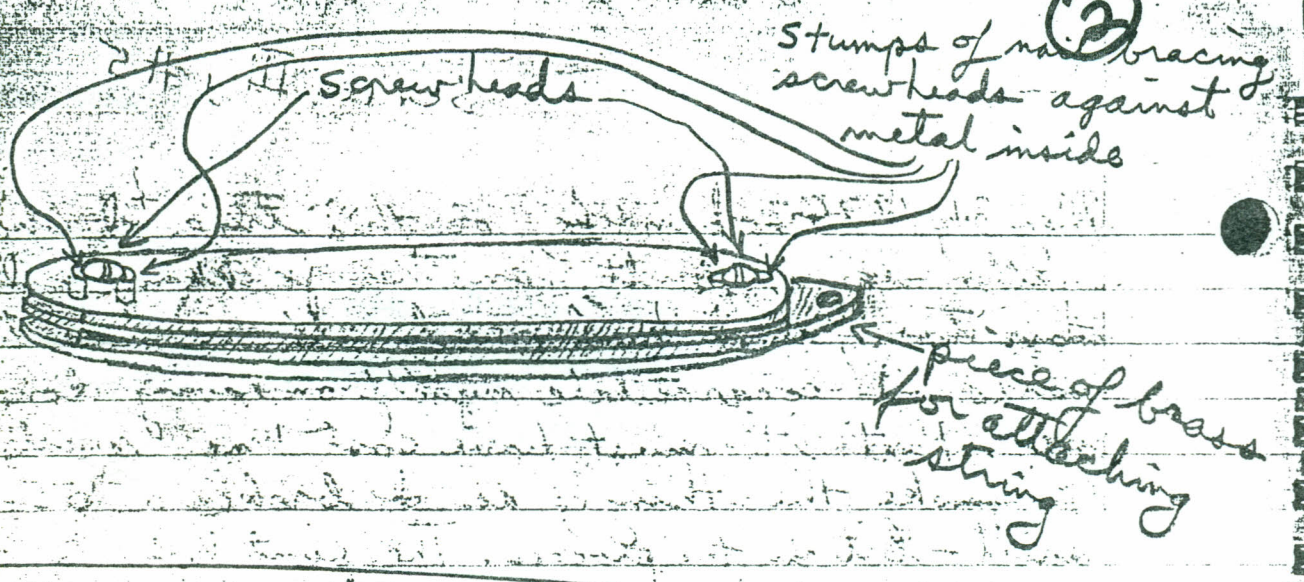


Series III, #5 (1)

May 31, 1974: I made, or this time I should rather say rebuilt, another jackknife. It was easier this time, as I had nearly all the essential metal parts. I congratulate myself on having done a lovely job. But it must have cost me nearly a dollar to make the thing, as I broke a 55-cent drill-bit in the process. The pivot holes in the blades I drilled out to a larger size. When the bit broke I put the handle-end of a small triangular file in the chuck of my drill, and found that the end of the file made an excellent bit. I then used two machine screws at the ends of the handle, and put epoxy on the threads to keep the nuts from working loose. In order to keep the nuts and screw-heads from digging into the wooden side-panels (which I made of service-berry wood) I embedded segments of a nail in the wood, which brace the nuts and screwheads against the metal panels. From some brass that I saved from a broken clock, I filed a gizmo with a hole in it which I built into the knife in such a way that the knife can be tied to a string. I varnished it. I wanted to thin the varnish to make it soak into the wood, but I had no thinner, so I thinned the stuff with some Thompson's Water-Seal. The main blade of this knife was still functioning when I took it apart to rebuild it, but the bottle-opener and can-opener blades were broken off, and one of the side-panels had come off. Also, the main blade was getting a little wobbly. As I rebuilt it, it has a main blade and a can-opener blade. The can-opener blade was from that old knife that fell [illegible]



June 1. I am getting my stuff ready for a hike in the "back country" (N. of highway 200). Yes, this place is getting more crowded all the time. This morning I was picking wild greens up by Humbug contour road, but had to quit and go home because I heard a pickup truck coming. Again I reminded the reader that for practical reasons it is hard to avoid being neighborly and dirty here, and even if I were I would be dirty, the sight of someone squatting by the roadside picking weeds and putting them in a bag would be sure to excite curiosity and questions. Some people aren't bothered by that sort of thing, but I am not one of them. Also, from the tracks I have seen, it appears that someone has been regularly driving along Humbug contour. I seem to be getting hemmed in on all sides by crowded places.

June 5. Weather has been unpropitious for starting my hike. Talk about this place being crowded. On the other side of Steeple pass road, between the road and the National Forest land, there is a strip of private land. They have just put up a fence along there with signs: "Keep Out — Private." Cut off my access to the National Forest land on the other side.

June 24: Yesterday I got back from 2 weeks in the back country. See small notebook. Will probably go back there again soon. My old little pistol (the second one) served me well but got a little rusty. The canvas holster got holes worn through it all over wherever it got rubbed by the corners of the pistol. The braided elk-hair strings that I used (on holster, as string on knife, and to hold my keys) held up very well. This string does not hold a square knot well, but half-hitches in series work very nicely. Very few mosquitoes around here, compared to the situation on the other side. I have just identified some blue flowers I see growing around here as a pentstemon — probably blue pentstemon, Penstemon cyaneus. I have looked up those striking little blue flowers that sprinkled the alpine meadows; they are Alpine Forget-me-not — Eritrichium elongatum. Also another plant I saw is unmistakably recognizable from the picture in the book as Lomatium macrocarpum, or biscuit-root — being in the same genus as the biscuit-root or cous, Lomatium utriculatum, that I have eaten.

June 25: By the way, I got the letter of Sears Roebuck on a little sled here. The little hinge dingus on the ash door of my stove broke off, so I ordered a new one. The girl who took the order said they would not charge me for postage on this, so I only paid $1.75 — the price of the door itself. When I got the door, I noticed that it cost them $1.90 postage just to send me the thing. Hope this won't force them into bankruptcy.

June 26: Just took a little stroll around and found the first wild strawberries of the year. They aren't anywhere near ripe yet, over on the north side of Granite Creek — seven kilometers there. I think [illegible] gulch. Little [illegible]

too. I would be tempted to spend the summer around here, but I'm getting so hemmed in by civilization around here that I feel compelled to seek the wilder areas on the other side. Yesterday and today there has been machinery working down around where those other people have moved in — I think they're putting in electricity or something.

June 27: I thought I heard machinery working up the gulch as well as down it. This morning I found that they have dug a big hole up at that mine and put a fence around it. I suppose they are going to recommence mining operations.

Aug. 9: On Aug. 5 I got home from 5 weeks (34 nights, 35 days) in the back country — a very satisfying hike, for which see small notebook. Next day Dave and his friend Joel arrived. They wanted to take a hike, so we took overnight hike to lake above Copper Lake. Nothing worth mentioning about this hike except that (a) Joel is the most helpless creature I ever encountered and (b) I caught 2 very large cutthroat trout — all the meat I wanted for supper. They were very tasty. Had mountain sorrel for salad, of course.

Aug 10: Drove to Lincoln to mail a letter today, then drove on to the place on Sucker Creek where I departed for my hikes. There I parked and went up the hill to pick huckleberries. The berries were a little sparse in distribution, but still I got nearly a gallon, about ¼ cup short. Put 1½ qts. in attic to dry, ate nearly a qt. for dessert after supper. Probably will eat the rest fresh tomorrow.

Aug 11: Took stroll up gulch mid-late afternoon, got just [illegible] quarts — about 2½ qts.

serviceberries. Made the currants into jam and had some on bannock this evening. Good! Have started reconstructing my pack. Big job.

Aug. 12: Went up the ridge today with my trusty .22 rifle. This spur seems to be a regular hangout of grouse. Found a whole flock. Shot 2 — one shot each. One of these was full-grown, the other obviously immature. I suppose the big one was the mother of the brood. Hope they will be able to get by without mama. They are pretty big and fly well, so I suppose they have a pretty fair chance of survival. They had been eating serviceberries and grasshoppers. Also get some wild greens — mostly dock. The big bird, after being shot, was unable to fly, but still ran well along the ground, so I had to run it down. That rifle seems almost noiseless compared to the pistol which is quite noisy. Late afternoon I went and dug about ⅔ cup of yampa. I have noticed that there's quite a bit of it a little way up the gulch. Even some growing right on our lot. So had an all-wild supper (except for a bit of salt and pepper in the soup). A soup of grouse, wild greens, and yampa. (An excellent soup. Yampa is certainly one of the most delicious of foods, and the grouse was tender and tasty.) And then I ate that quart and a half of huckleberries that I had put in the attic to dry. The weather has been cloudy, and they have been drying too slowly, so I thought it better to eat them now than risk having them get moldy. A very satisfactory supper. Just had a terrible cloudburst with enormous hailstones.

Aug. 14: Yesterday I [illegible] to [illegible] huckleberries

got 3½ cups black currants and found an excellent crop of black elderberries. I probably would have had more than a gallon of these last if I'd finished separating the berries from the stems — which I did not, for reasons that will appear shortly. In late afternoon I had a fine meal — that little grouse, which was extremely tender and delicious, boiled in a soup with greens, rice, etc., black currant sauce for dessert, and ½ cup elderberries eaten raw with milk and sugar. They didn't taste very good raw, but they are supposed to have a high vitamin C content, of which I wanted to take advantage. About a half an hour later I became nauseated, and half an hour after that I puked it all up. Then I experienced nausea, with intermittent vomiting and diarrhea for some hours afterward. What bothers me about this is not so much the discomfort I went through as losing that lovely delicious little grouse. I ascribe this to the elderberries, because a couple of days ago I ate a mouthful or so of these in late afternoon and was nauseated next morning, though I didn't vomit. So the first act on getting up this morning was to throw out all the elderberries. Donald R. Kirk (Wild Edible Plants of the Western U.S.) says of Elderberries: "Some people experience nausea when eating the fruit raw, but cooking renders it safe to all." So maybe I should have saved those berries after all, and tried them as jam. But, really, I don't have much inclination to experiment any further with them just now. Some years ago, I used to eat modest quantities of these elderberries back east, and I don't remember having any discomfort as a result; but there are several species of elderberries and it is here that different ones

Aug. 16: Went up the ridge yesterday to look for meat, but got none. Saw several grouse, but they were all very shy. Couldn't find any squirrels cutting down pine cones. But I did find some fine yampa-digging in the meadows on the ridge behind Bally. It is a joy to wander through these incomparable pairs and meadows, and to sit and gaze at the mountains on the other side of Pearman Creek. Anyway — I had nothing to dig with but a pointed stick, but I nevertheless got almost a pint of yampa. I had this for lunch along with something over ½ cup serviceberries that I found and some cooked food. Large areas of meadow up there are chock full of yampa, but it is practical to dig for it only in a small portion of this area, because elsewhere the matted grass roots make digging too difficult. Luckily I found some more soft, wet ground with lots of yampa in it. This morning I went up the ridge with pack and spade to get yampa and did much better than yesterday. In a lovely park I scared up a flock of immature grouse, and neatly slew two with one shot each. One of these was so inconsiderate as to get stuck up in the tree when it died and I had to climb for it. A tricky climb. Then I spent at least 3, maybe 4 hours digging yampa, which effort netted me one quart of these tasty roots. I worked shirtless in the sun and enjoyed just being there. I grow fonder of that ridgetop all the time! On the way home I got some wild greens and onion tops, and about ⅔ cup Oregon grapes, from which I extracted a little less than ⅔ cup juice. So I had practically an all-wild supper, which actually served as both lunch and supper, as I missed lunch. First I boiled that quart of yampa, then in the same water I boiled one grouse with the greens and onion tops and a little salt and pepper. Also, I had a handful of [illegible]

cicely leaves for salad, and, of course, the Oregon grape juice for dessert, with maybe 1 3/3 heaping spoons of sugar in it. That sugar and a bit of salt + pepper was the only civilized food I had. It was a square meal, and I have maybe ½ cup of the boiled yampa left over for tomorrow. The more time I spend in the woods, the better I like it. Also, I brought back a little Alum-root (Heuchera sp.) for next time I get an upset stomach. Alum-root is supposed to cure diarrhea. Forgot to mention that yesterday I finally got around to making those black currants up into jam. Sealed up 2 one-cup jars of it with paraffine, ate the rest last night and this morning.

Aug 17: This morning for breakfast I had mashed yampa mixed with soybean oil & a delicious combination reminiscent of coconut) washed down with cocoa. Then I finished repairing my pack. Now have it in good shape. Next, I went across Poorman Creek (by the devious route that is now necessary) to look for Oregon Grapes. Found that there is nothing like the magnificent crop of these berries that there was last year. But I did get rather more than a pint of them, from which I extracted about 1 3/4 cup juice, and I got some wild onions, wild greens, mint for tea, and a few service-berries. Scared up some immature grouse but got no chance at them. Lots of grouse around this year! Had a very fine lunch: That lovely, tender little grouse, boiled, a soup of rice, barley, lentils, greens, seasoned with wild onions, salt, pepper, and the Oregon Grape juice for dessert.

Aug. 18: Yesterday I took advantage of the abundant crop of [illegible]

right by the cabin and picked a quart in about 15 min. I've had enough of black currant jam for now, so I spread these in the attic to dry. Black currants have a strong, peculiar odor. They are good when cooked as jam — up to a point. Then they pall decidedly. Two varieties grow around here — the smooth and the hairy. I consider the hairy slightly better. Some bear has lately been feasting on black currants in this gulch, as I see from his turds. Anyway, after that I took a leisurely ramble up the gulch just for the pleasure of it, and I brought back one cup of serviceberries, and a (mature) spruce grouse that I'd chanced to meet and killed with shot. I had to make haste in cleaning the grouse and cooking my bannock for supper, as dark was coming on. Washed that bannock down with delicious mint tea and had the serviceberries for dessert. This morning I went running on Humbug Canyon Rd. 4 miles very comfortably, felt very light of foot even though I haven't run for weeks. Rambling over these hills keeps one in excellent shape. I kept 3 of Gehring's cows running ahead of me most of the way. They ran surprisingly well for such clumbering animals. At the end of the road I found a patch of seeds of some member of the mustard family of a kind that I used a little last fall. I gathered some of these, but to gather them efficiently I'll have to get back with my light pack so that I can pull up the whole plants and stuff them in. I also got 1 3/8 quarts of oregon grapes, from which I extracted not quite a quart of juice. And I identified a new plant — one which I've seen often before but never identified — Snowbush, Ceanothus [illegible]

velutinus. Of course I had the grouse in a soup for lunch with greens, etc. Drank the whole quart of O. G. juice for dessert.

Aug. 19: Had sore legs from yesterday's unaccustomed running, so stayed around cabin today. Got about 4/5 pint serviceberries up the gulch, which served for today's fruit ration. Have been having lots of delicious mint tea lately.

Aug. 20: For some reason, beans have been affecting me adversely of late. They cause excessive gas, belches of a most repellent flavor, and after some nausea. This all occurs many hours after the beans are eaten. Had no meat the 17th, so ate beans for supper, and had the unpleasant symptoms yesterday morning. Nevertheless, I walked to the end of Humbug Canton yesterday morning and stuffed my light pack full of those seed-bearing mustard plants. Could have got more if my pack had been bigger, but I got the greater part of the crop, anyway. Seed now have a big pile of the stuff drying on the board at the stove (the weather has been rainy). On the way home I shot a big old blue grouse, one shot. There certainly are a lot of grouse around this year! Also I found a couple of handfuls of huckleberries still hanging on the bushes and picked just barely short of 1 quart of Oregon grapes. That grouse was big enough for 2 days' meat, so I had just the back, legs, wings, and giblets in my soup for supper (with wild onion, yellow monkey flower, rice, noodles) and saved the breast for today. That grouse had a lot of fat on it, and seemed particularly tasty. Oregon grape juice for dessert, of course.

Aug. 21: Just got back from 6 nights out — hiked to Granite Butte, for account of which see small notebook. When I got back, I observed that there was a fine crop of serviceberries on the bush right next to the cabin. This bush seems to be the best one around,

with regard to both quantity and quality of Berries. So I picked from that bush and the nearby ones, and from the bushes a little way up the gulch, and got not quite a pint of serviceberries, which served as today's fruit ration. I might mention that my home-made machete sheath, jackknife, and wallet have all been holding up and serving well.

Aug 31: Evening of day before yesterday I saw something very repulsive. I noticed a mouse that was so slow and listless that I concluded it was sick. I caught it by putting an overturned pot over it. Actually, the mouse ran for it just as I brought the pot down, so that its neck was caught under the rim, which killed it. I soon found that I had done that mouse a great favor by killing it. Attached to its underside were 3 or 4 bizarre and disgusting parasites. Each was like a fat, brown grub with leathery skin, the largest about the size and shape of the last joint of my little finger — a pretty big parasite for a tiny mouse to carry around. Each had bored a large hole through the mouse's skin and had latched onto the flesh underneath, presumably to suck nourishment from the mouse. Naturally, I burned that mouse and all its parasites.

Yesterday I went out foraging. Got no meat, but I found that the shaggy-manes were out in masses already, and I picked as many as I could use. Also, I got 5½ cups of Oregon Grapes (from which I got a quart of juice), and about a cup of chokecherries; and I took some mountain ash berries to try as jelly. I made about a cup of this jelly. It has a marked bitterness and is not very good on bread. But it tastes pretty good eaten alone. It makes a good appetizer to begin a meal. It tastes a bit like

jelled cranberry sauce. For lunch, of course, I had lots of mushrooms cooked with cornmeal and cooking oil.

This morning I went up the ridge with light pack, spade, and rifle. I encountered a large flock of blue grouse, which were pretty shy, but I got a young one, anyway; one shot, of course. Just below the first peak East of Baldy Lake on the ridge I found excellent yampa digging and in 2 or 3 hours I got 5½ cups, no less, of this nourishing and tasty root. Stopped off to get a bag of mushrooms on the way home. The weather had a bit of autumn in it today and I enjoyed just strolling home through those pleasant parks of Douglas fir. There is a joy in seeing a new country, as I did last summer this summer, but there is also a joy in seeing the same old familiar country over and over again. Amy knows I had mushrooms and cornmeal for lunch, naturally, and some mountain-ash jelly too. I am now making for supper a soup of grouse with the mushrooms, a couple of handfuls of greens, a few wild onions, and a pinch of salt; and I am boiling about 3½ cups yampa, saving the other pint or so for tomorrow. Also I have a couple of spoonfuls of mountain-ash jelly for an aperitif and I expect to have a pint or so of oregon grape juice (left from yesterday) for dessert. Later: So I had a nearly all-wild supper. Only civilized stuff was a bit of salt in the soup and several spoonfuls of sugar in the O. grape juice and the bit of Mountain-ash jelly. Heavy rain now. I certainly was lucky with the weather. Had almost no rain at all in recent days. I just happened to hit the dry spell.

between 2 rainy spells.

Sept. 1: Snow on top of Stonewall and adjacent mountains this morning. Autumn is coming. A fairly substantial part of my food supply today was yampa left over from yesterday; both the pint that I didn't cook yesterday and some of the cooked stuff that I didn't eat yesterday. I find it best to use plenty of water in cooking yampa to be sure that it comes out tender. Today I picked a lot of chokecherries (close to home) and made, I would guess, more than a qt. of jelly from them. Only trouble is, the stuff hasn't jelled yet, and I suspect it's not going to. I was short of pectin and I guess I tried to stretch it too far. But the stuff has a fine flavor and a rich, deep-red color. I guess I'll just have to pour it over bread or bannock & eat it with a fork. I sealed up 4 jars of it with paraffin. Weather has turned clear again now.

Sept. 2: Went running today, down to the end of Hewlett Gorton Road, as usual. On the way back I looked for Oregon Grapes but only got a little less than a pint. But the mushrooms were still out in great masses, and I took a bagful of those. When I got home I had a fairly large quantity of mushrooms and cornmeal, with Oregon grape juice for dessert. A good meal. Then a good nap. After that I went up to the little road that goes by the cabin and cleaned out and deepened my little ditches up there. I expect to start looking for employment soon, and while I am gone I want the water to run off the right way instead of washing out the road.

October 10: Sketch of my latest misadventures. Seem I always have misadventures any time I'm in contact with civilization. Have been sick to my stomach ever since I got back.

I found employment pretty promptly through a want-ad. Job as service-station attendant at Raynesford — $2.00 per hour. The employer — a salesman type with a huge belly — gave me a lot of B.S. about how much extra money I could make in bonuses for fixing tires, selling air filters, and the like. I figured he was exaggerating, but the situation turned out to be even worse than I feared — one could make only a negligible amount in bonuses. I did not like the work, and, especially, I disliked the boss. Usually he was repulsively oily, and sometimes he was rude. I am not one to stomach rudeness, so I quit — purposely avoided giving advance notice. I just didn't show up for work one morning. Later I sent him a self-addressed, stamped envelope for him to send my check in, which he did because he had to, though he probably didn't like it. So I made, altogether $226. after taxes — better than nothing, anyway. In the meantime, my Chevelle was getting so bad — it was costing so much to keep it running — that I decided I would have to get something else, transportation being practically a necessity out at Raynesford. As long as I was doing that, I thought I would like to get a used pickup, because I wanted to try my hand at cutting posts and poles in the hope of making more money. Also it would be very desirable to be my own boss. Of course the venture was questionable — one hears very conflicting stories as to what kind of money one can make at post-cutting. But I find it so humiliating and so galling looking for a job (the job-seeker is always more or less in the position of a supplicant) and so reluctant to go back to the big cities (it's hard to get decent wages in Montana) that I thought I

would gamble on it. For $373.00 plus my Chevelle I got a used pickup — for $90.00 a new, small chain saw. Ever since I got that pickup I have had nothing but trouble with it. On top of that the chain saw won't function properly. Bouma post-yard gave me a place to cut up near Dalton mountain, accessible only by an incredibly bad road. Yesterday it was coming down Dalton Mtn. Road with my first load of posts, when the engine on that truck decided it wasn't going to run any more. Occasionally in the past the engine on that truck has died, and then has become flooded before it would start again. One then has to wait half an hour and the thing will then start. But this time I waited half an hour and the thing still wouldn't start. I tried again with same result. By this time dark was falling, so I went a little way into the woods and camped for the night — then I felt comfortable and at home again. Of course, I was tired, hungry, and thirsty; had only one thin blanket, and had nothing waterproof of any kind with which to keep off the rain of which there was some possible threat. But that's nothing. That kind of problem I know how to deal with, and, what's more, I can deal with it without having to mesh with other people or with civilization in any way. Spent a somewhat chilly night, but slept reasonably well anyway. In the morning I tried the truck again. It still wouldn't start, so I hiked home cross-country. Being tired, angry, and discouraged I haven't done anything about the truck today, and don't know what I will do about it tomorrow. But I can see that, even if that truck were functioning well, I could make very little money at that game. The truck was certainly overloaded — the back end was way, way down, the tires partially flattened by the

backward tilt of the truck so great that the load was tending to slide off the back. Yet I figured out the value of that load, and it came to only $16.68. Might be OK if one were close enough to the post yard to make 2 trips a day, or if one had a bigger truck; but as it is, it's no good. This makes me hate society all the more. Why? you ask. Ain't society's fault that I gambled on buying an old beat-up truck to go into a business I knew nothing about. True enough, but the whole underlying problem is brought about by organized society. Without such society, I would have been living from birth the life I want, & if things were still sufficiently uncrowded so that one could simply go into the far northern woods, build a cabin, and "squat" for a while, I wouldn't need so much money to get myself a place, or if this place were not getting so infiltrated with the civilization, I wouldn't even need to go north. As it is, it is very difficult to escape permanently from the necessity of living in crowded, unwholesome conditions and spending one's life as some employer's flunkey.

Note: At approximately the same time that I came to that Raynesford service station, two other new employees were hired there, and it is interesting that all of us were, in some degree at least, trying to escape civilization. One of these 2 was an unpleasant fellow whom I disliked. I was told he wanted to live back in the country with horses and all that. The other was a girl from Tucson who had come to Montana and was living with some people she knew in Stanford. She said she wanted to work with animals in the country and all that kind of stuff. It

liked her very well, but she was a dumpy thing with no sex appeal whatever.

Nov. 2: Last couple of weeks I have been cutting posts and paying Glen Williams to haul them into the post yard with his trailer. It's not very lucrative, but I am earning something, anyway. When Glen hauled in the first big load for me, he says the guy at Bouma post yard said "It looks like a good load" [Quality — wise — i.e., uniform lengths, no undersized ones, etc.] I have now got that patch all cut out, and am investigating a couple of possibilities for more stumpage. Yesterday in this connection I saw Paul Olsen, the ranger in charge of posts and poles, and he said he was up there to inspect my patch (with regard to the way slash was piled, whether stumps were short enough, etc.), and he said "It looks good — real good." Ha! You see I always do everything right! But in the business, I'm afraid, I'd make more money if I were more careless. Being careful takes time, of course, so the posts don't get cut as fast.

Nov. 20, 1974: The post-cutting business having petered out for me for the present, for reasons which I need not go into here, I got myself a deer today, though there were only 12 days of the season left. Got my deer on the 18th; the 5th day that I hunted. First 4 days there was no snow. First 2 days I hunted up around Baldy without seeing deer. Third day I hiked down to the mouth of Cottonwood Gulch, which is what Kenny Lee calls that gulch where I killed the elk last year. That place is a regular hangout for whitetails. I saw 7 deer — five whitetails. Could have shot one of them, but there was a small tree blocking the best

spot to aim for; I tried to move a few feet for a better shot and the deer took off. Anyhow, it looked good around there, so next day I loaded up my pack and hiked over to my campsite up that gulch. Day after that I hunted but only saw 2 whitetails. Then that night there was snow! Which brought joy to my heart, though there was only half an inch or so. In the morning I found that the tracking was very poor down around the mouth of the gulch because the snow was so thin and patchy. Nevertheless, I could probably have killed a whitetail that I found there except that again I wasn't satisfied and tried to move for a better shot and the deer took off. So I picked up a track — probably of a mule deer — in the upper part of the gulch and followed it around for miles. The trouble was that the snow creaked under my feet so that it was impossible to be quiet. Twice I heard the deer snorting in the woods ahead of me when it heard me coming, but I never did see it. Finally I gave up because dusk appeared to be coming. Later I found that this was only because clouds and falling snow were blotting out so much light, but by that time I was on my way home. This was on the steep slopes near where I killed the elk last year, but higher up. I was just thinking that there would be few deer in this place, when I saw one moving in the woods up ahead. It stopped and stood still — probably it was looking in my direction, but I am not sure because I could not see its head clearly. But the rest of its body was all exposed, and I had plenty of time for aim, so I shot at it, even though it was farther away than I would have liked. The shot was with

my .30-30. The deer ran a couple of hundred yards before it fell, way out of my sight, so at first I feared I might have missed altogether, but I followed its tracks and found it lying dead. So I met my usual goal of getting my game with one shot. The bullet passed through the forward part of the lungs. This deer was a female mule deer fawn, small enough so that I was able to carry it on my shoulders even before I took the guts out. I carried it part way back to camp that way, then I gutted it, hung it up, and left it. Next morning another inch or so of snow had fallen, the tracking was much better, and the snow was no longer creaky. There were lots of deer tracks and even a couple of sets of elk tracks. Would have been much better hunting, but of course I already had my deer and didn't have an elk tag, so I went and got my deer, hoisted it on my shoulders and carried it all the way back to the cabin — probably 6 miles or so. I had a little food and rest, then hiked back to the camp to get my pack. By the time I got there it was too late to go home again, so I spent another night out. I sat there before my nice warm fire thinking how good it was to be out there in the woods. I can be content just sitting by a campfire at night staring into the coals for hours. In civilization one gets bored just sitting like that. For supper I boiled the heart of the deer with some rice and lentils. The heart was very tender and I greatly enjoyed it. Today I had a delicious lunch of fried deer liver and onions, and a can of mixed carrots. For supper I had almost just straight venison — kidneys, tongue, liver, some meat and heart stew

the abdominal wall stewed with a little seasoning. Washed down with sugared water (4 heaping spoons sugar) and ½ handful of raisins for dessert. Very good and satisfying. Nov. 21: Straight meat for supper. Venison stew just. Rocky Mountain venison and Rocky Mountain stream water — nothing else, no salt, pepper, or any such thing. Yet it made a most delicious and nourishing stew. Perhaps the best part was the rich broth. This deer had lots of fat on it and this meat was taken all from the fat parts. Handful of raisins for dessert. Nov. 22: Had almost nothing but venison to eat all day today. For breakfast, a piece of cold boiled venison saved from yesterday, with fir-needle tea (2 spoonfuls sugar). For lunch, the deer's head and a piece of back meat boiled, and fir-needle tea again (2 spoonfuls sugar). For supper, stewed venison and a handful of raisins for dessert. This is a tasty diet and satisfies the appetite very well. In fact, I had to trim more lean than fat meat in my stew because I had been spoiling my apetite with too many calories. Must admit it is a heart-attack diet, though, as that deer fat is very hard. But it's nice to know that, at least in the cool seasons when meat will keep, a guy could take to the hills with his rifle and live very well off the country — until the game wardens caught up with him. Probably would have to waste a lot of clean meat, though, as I doubt there is enough fat on a deer to make a balanced diet with all that clean
Nov. 23: A few more bites venison again today. By the time

the day is over my only civilized foods will have been a pot of cocoa, a handful of raisins, 3 spoons sugar, an onion, and a can of fruit cocktail. Lunch was especially good: Fried deer loin, fried onion (all fried in deer fat of course), and rose-hip tea. My supper of stewed venison is on the stove, ready to eat, but I'm just not hungry yet. That fat is so calorie-rich that I am sated, though I have not eaten a large volume today. Of course, I haven't had much exercise the last 3 days, but up through the 20th I was working very strenuously, so my appetite ought still to be good. Well, so much the better. Food is so expensive now that if I can overstuff myself on fat venison for a few days it is a great advantage. Nov. 24: Fine supper, all wild except for ... sugar in the rose-hip tea, which is what I had for dessert after the stew of venison and native watercress. Had to violate three no-trespassing signs across the road to get the native water-cress. Nov. 26: All-wild supper, as usual, except for 4½ spoons sugar in the rose-hip tea. Violated those no-trespassing signs again to visit a spot I had noticed where there was yampa and the ground was not much frozen. Spent an hour or so and got a shade over a cup of yampa. Found a very abundant crop of rose-hips and a little dock and pennycress. So for supper I had first yampa, then a stew of venison cooked in the yampa juice with a generous handful of chopped greens, and lots of rose-hip tea for dessert — very thick, with plenty of pulp in it. The yampa came out very tender (I used plenty of water) and was exquisitely delicious. The venison stew was superb as usual. The rose-hip tea was a little

disappointing — perfectly palatable, but not as tasty as usual. Maybe I've been drinking too much of it lately. Have had stewed venison as the principal ingredient of my supper every day since the 20th and ain't in the least tired of it yet. In fact, the idea of adulterating it with rice or noodles almost repels me. Started building a sawhorse for myself today.

Nov. 28: Still having straight venison every day for supper and enjoying it as much as ever. Today for dessert after my venison stew I had stewed dried blackcurrants. That quart of blackcurrants that I dried late in the summer swelled up to a little over a cup when dry. I took about half of these and stewed them with sugar. That puny quantity of dried berries swelled up to a respectable serving when cooked. I would like to say they weren't half bad, but in actual fact they were considerably more than half bad. In fact, I haven't quite finished them yet. I did choke down that last bit when I felt up to it. That blackcurrant jam (I finished it some time ago — also the Choke-cherry "jelly" which turned out to be syrup) wasn't bad at all if one didn't try to eat too much at a time, but these stewed dried ones palled very much sooner than the jam. Live and learn. Sawed a good deal of firewood today. New sawhorse very satisfactory.

Nov. 30. Aug 21 I reported gathering some seeds for food. I finally got around to sifting them and parching them. Last 2 mornings I've cooked some for breakfast as a cereal. They had good flavor but were not very good eating. I'm sure there

was too much grit in it. When I gathered the seeds I didn't worry about grit because I figured it would settle out when the seeds were sifted and so forth. But it didn't. Actually, these parched seeds are good eating just as they are, parched but not boiled, and they get chewed more efficiently that way, too, but they are slow eating, so I think I'll stay mixing them 50-50 with white flour to make bread. Still eating straight venison was the main part of my supper every day and still not tired of it, and never will be, I suppose. But I'll soon have to start putting rice or some such thing in my stews, as the fat part of the meat is mostly used up now, though I still have nearly a pint of rendered fat from the animal. Some time ago I reported that beans were disturbing my digestion. Have eaten beans a few times since then and had no trouble.

Dec. 1st. My luncheon bread today was made from 50% white flour and 50% those seeds. Tasted pretty good, even if it was a little gritty. Since the fat meat on my deer is getting pretty scanty now, tonight I am going to adulterate my supper stew with beans and rice. But for 12 days straight I had mainly just venison for supper. Had at least some meat with almost every lunch and breakfast, too. Day before yesterday, the road being in sufficiently good condition, I went to Lincoln to get some postage stamps - first time I had my truck out in a couple of weeks. While there, I bought a cabbage and since then have had raw cabbage to begin every meal. Will finish the rest of it tonight.

Dec. 3. Went and got some watercress this morning

and had a fine lunch — boiled deer meat, boiled watercress with good-sized lumps of deer fat melted into it after it was cooked, the soup from boiling the meat and greens, a cake of bannock made from half white flour and half parched seeds, and a can of rootbeer for dessert.

Dec. 10: Paid the Lees a visit a couple of days ago and brought them a rabbit. They gave me a few pounds of very small potatoes that they dug prematurely, and a few onions and rutabagas. I have been dining very pleasantly on these — and on venison, of course.

Dec. 13: Today for supper I will have the last of my venison, kept for some time allowing to dry, for camping rations. But my flesh pots are full — yesterday I killed a large, fat, muscular porcupine, which I will commence eating tomorrow. Took me 5 shots to kill the bugger — a record. He was way up high in a huge old fir — undimbable, and no climbable trees nearby. He was in an awkward place, curled up into a big ball of fur and quills couldn't tell head from tail. But he's a lot of meat!

Dec. 16: Today I finished making myself a belt from deerskin, my old belt having been about ready to give out. Seems to work well, but only time will tell about its durability, etc. My homemade jackknife and wallet are still in service and holding up perfectly well. Hunting has been very bad lately, for some reason. Since killing

that porcupine) all I've gotten is one squirrel (one shot, of course). Still eating porcupine, but expect to finish it tomorrow.
Dec. 18: Finally finished eating all those dried black currants. Actually they weren't at all bad if only a small quantity was eaten at one time. Shot another porcupine yesterday — one shot.
Dec. 19: Today I was out for 6 hours, and after much effort brought home 2 rabbits, each killed neatly with one shot in the head. At last! My rabbit-hunting has been very unsuccessful lately, though these 2 porcupines have kept me well supplied with meat. Seems as if the bunnies either don't move at all, or move so much that they make an undecipherable tangle of tracks. Also, I suspect that last winter I pretty well depleted the rabbit population in my favorite hunting ground, the ridge behind Baldy, though there are a couple of untried areas there that may be worthwhile. One of my rabbits got up on that ridge today. I tracked it to an area with a lot of downfall. Here the tracks were too numerous and tangled to follow, but I went through the area slowly and carefully and spotted a rabbit asleep — with its eyes open, of course — in a typical rabbity depression in the snow under a log. I moved up for a shot, took aim, and click! the gun missed fire. I assumed it was a bad cartridge, but when I took the cartridge out of the gun I noticed that it had no mark from the firing pin. Investigation proved that snow had gotten into the action, melted, and frozen again, so that the firing pin was frozen in place. So I had to retreat a few yards, take the gun apart

got the bolt under my clothes till it was threaded out. Then I went back and got the bunny. As for the other bunny, I got him in the thickets not 200 yards from the cabin. On the way out, in the morning, I found rabbit tracks there, started to follow them, and was about to give up because of their tangled nature, when I saw a rabbit move just ahead of me. But he was alert and I couldn't get a shot. I couldn't trail him because of the tangle of tracks. But on my way home, I went back to the same spot. The rabbits have been moving hardly at all during the day (as indicated by their tracks), probably because with these very long nights they can afford to be strictly nocturnal. So I figured the rabbit would probably just stop and go to sleep when I stopped pursuing him. Sure enough, I found him at almost exactly the same spot where I had last seen him. There is a great deal of those thick, snowy woods where rabbits generally hang out. Particularly beautiful these white clouds against a superb blue sky just before dusk today. I am in a good mood. Have the rabbits all cleaned and cut up and my flesh-pots are full.

Dec. 20: Nearly all wild lunch today — porcupine bacon, porcupine meat, fir-needle tea (with 3 spoons sugar), handful of raisins for dessert. Winter Solstice: Chinook this morning — snow all melty, balmy temperatures. The Chinook and certain similar winds in other parts of the world, are reputed to have a

psychologically disturbing effect. It always gives me an urge to get out and move. So I took a walk this morning. Just before I got home there was a sudden change in the weather and I found myself in a blizzard which has been blowing off and on all the rest of the day.

Dec. 22: Went out and got 2 rabbits in 2 or 2½ hours this morning just around home gulch here. Right here seems to be where the best rabbit hunting is this year. One of these rabbits I got by simply tracking it to where it was resting, or sleeping with its eyes open as I suppose. The other I got by the same device I used to get that rabbit on the 17th. Just after dawn, moving along the rabbit trails (tracking any particular rabbit being impossible because of the quantity of tracks) I spotted this bunny but it had not gone to sleep yet and moved to a thicker bit of brush when I spied him. Then around that patch of thicket I located it by one little beady black eye gazing at me out of the tangle. But conditions were not propitious for a close approach, so I went and hunted down that other rabbit, expecting the first one to go to sleep right where I had left it. When I came back, however, it had moved — only a hundred feet or so, but I couldn't trail it because of the number of tracks. [redacted] of the tracks led me to the tentative conclusion that it was probably in a certain patch of thicket and searching through there I found it sleeping next to a stump. Both rabbits killed with one shot in head, of course.

Dec. 23: Took a long hike primarily for exercise today

Snow in most places was considerably deeper than at the cabin and I wished I had taken my snowshoes. It was 12° when I left the cabin, but over in the area of the watercress springs it felt much colder. But it was around zero. I didn't have proper footgear for such weather and my toes got all numb. I stopped off at one of the 2 watercress springs — the smaller one — and got a little watercress — just a handful, as the cold made it inconvenient to get more. It is remarkable that those springs don't freeze over in such weather. Perhaps the water comes out at a temperature well above freezing. I also got a good gathering of rose hips. I located a [illegible] by following its tracks a short way, but couldn't get it. Because it was so [illegible] that I couldn't get a decent shot at it, and no amount of banging on the tree would make the sleepy beast stick its head out. I am planning to treat myself, likewise, to some extent, on Christmas. It occurred to me on the way home that I would have a little meat on Christmas if I didn't kill something before then, and Ok Hunting tomorrow is not likely to be particularly good because clear skies promised no snow (it was a beautiful day); so instead of going straight home I went up in the thickets south of the cabin. As usual, the maze of trails made for terrible tracking, but I followed some of the tracks through the thickets for a couple of hours, until at last I had the good fortune to spy a couple of nice [illegible]

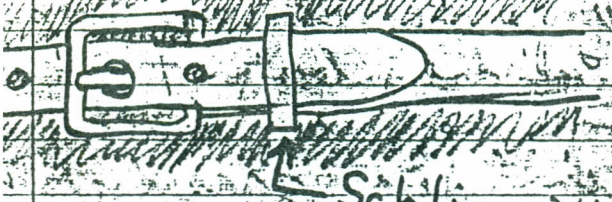
ears sticking up. I shot the bunny through the head and so will have meat for Christmas. I get about a rabbit a day unless I have porcupine or something else. Anyhow, all the time I spent made me miss lunch, but I made up for it with an ample supper. While I was out I noticed, in an open prairie, a lodgepole pine of extraordinary form. It had a straight central trunk like other lodgepoles, but it was short and stunted, and the side-branches were thick and heavy like the boughs of a deciduous tree, so that the tree had a rounded, full silhouette.

Dec. 24: Yesterday on my way home I picked up a rabbit trail probably a good quarter mile as the crow flies from the cabin and followed it across our lot into the thickets on the other side where the rabbits hang out. When one trails rabbits they usually go a good deal less than a quarter mile (as the crow flies) before the double back, keeping within what is presumably their familiar territory. But exceptions such as the above are not uncommon — sometimes I have trailed them $\frac{1}{3}$ or perhaps $\frac{1}{2}$ mile as the crow flies. Now I read somewhere — I think in Ernest Thompson Seton's Lives of the Game Animals that each snowshoe hare has its own territory within which it stays. If this is supposed to mean that the whole area is divided up like a checkerboard into territories whose boundaries are faithfully observed by the rabbits, then I don't believe it. Their territories can't be a quarter mile in diameter, because there are too many rabbits for such large territories. In an area of thicket near the cabin probably not over 150 ft across [illegible] rabbits in the last few days [illegible]

that I'll still find plenty of tracks in there. In that whole stretch of thicket south of the cabin the trails ramble all over the place; often one can trail a rabbit most of the way across the thicket, and it isn't all his territory, either — there are too many of them for that unless we assume the places are gerrymandered up into bizarrely shaped, very elongated territories. The rabbits come out at night into the open places, and (as in the example with which I opened this entry) they may wander a considerable distance; then they all bed up at night in that thicket. If they have anything like well-defined territories, we would have to postulate a communal territory owned by a whole group of rabbits — but if that is so, then it is the first I have ever heard of rabbits being herd animals. (In that regard I may state that I have killed over fifty of these rabbits, and only once did I see two of them near each other — and that was during the mating season.) I have a suspicion that this business of territoriality in animals has been rather over-stressed, and that in many cases — perhaps the majority of cases — the territories are neither so well-defined nor so rigid as one might suppose from reading books like Andrey's. Still, I can think of one way of reconciling the situation observed with well-defined territories. It may be that each year some female rabbit has that territory and raises in the summer a brood of say half a dozen young who are full-grown by fall but still spend the winter in mama's territory, then go seek their own territories next summer. Still, that doesn't seem quite right, since these rabbits are all full-grown, perfectly independent, and don't frequent each other's company.

(see March 27 entry, below)

Christmas Day: Gave myself a Christmas present— I mean in addition to indulging myself foodwise. That deerskin belt I made for myself didn't have a schlimzicket, the schlimzicket being the part that holds the belt down flat after it passes through the buckle. So I made one from a scrap of copper tubing— did a very neat job of it, and put a high polish on it so that it qualifies as an article of jewelry. Copper has that lovely pink color. I just finished making it today, and I put it on the belt.



Schlimzicket

Dec. 27: Yesterday I went and tracked down that I mentioned on the 23rd and killed it with ... in the head. Cleaned it the same day. It was big and I now have lots of meat on hand.

Dec. 29: That latest porcupine was very big and meaty, though not very fat for a winter porcupine. Despite its size, it is also quite tender and is fine eating. I'm still eating it.

New Year's Day, 1975: Today I went rabbit hunting and got two. First I went up through the thickets on the S. slope of the gulch, and finding nothing came down through the gulch bottom, where I found very fresh tracks. I followed them a short distance and found a rabbit sleeping right out in the open, in the sun. I killed it with one shot in the head. That was an unusual place to find a rabbit. I suspect that the rare mile

rabbit out; and, being still drowsy, it just went to sleep any old place. I took the rabbit home, then I went for a walk up the spur ridge that leads up to Baldy — not to hunt, particularly — just for the walk and the exercise. On the north slope of this ridge, near the top, there were great tangles of rabbit tracks. On the way back I walked through these rabbity places in the hope of finding one — which I did, but it was awake and alert. It took me 2 shots to get this one. The first shot just grazed its head enough to weaken it some. I had to track it quite a ways; then I killed it with a shot through the head. That was the last rabbit this winter that I did get directly with one shot. So I've got 8 rabbits for 9 shots so far — not bad.

March 26: Returned the 19th from unsuccessful job-hunt in California — see brown notebook. Have shot 5 rabbits (one shot each) since then. Yesterday I went up on the ridge in an attempt to poach a deer with my .22, since I am in a serious financial straits and want to conserve my food supplies as much as possible. I found a substantial herd of mule deer up there (2 dozen?), keeping a little group of trees between me and the deer. I worked to within maybe 100 yards of them, but could get no closer as there was no more cover between me and the deer. Could, doubtless have got one with my .30-30 or .30-06, but didn't care to try at that distance with the .22. Later I found myself within about 50 ft of a deer. The animal stood in a very miserable picture with its head down,

this, and the fact that it let me get so close, made me wonder if it was sick. I shot it in the chest with a hollow-point bullet. It went a few steps, stood a moment, then keeled over dead. I looked it over and found I had performed a mercy-killing. The animal was extremely emaciated and had a large tumor — not much smaller than my fist — on the right side of its face. I just left it for the coyotes, as I felt nervous about handling the meat of such a diseased animal. By the way, an interesting thing happened just before I left for California, which I haven't yet put in this journal. Glen Williams and I drove up on Dalton Mountain to cut a load of firewood, for which he paid me a few bucks. While we were working, a tall, rugged-looking old fellow of perhaps 50 summers came walking up to us from out of the woods. He gave his name, but I don't remember it, which is just as well, since I wouldn't want to blow his cover by revealing it. For convenience, I will call him Mr. Bonaparte. One was immediately struck by the look of suspicion in his eyes. After some commonplace introductory remarks Mr. Bonaparte stated that the battery on his vehicle was dead, and he requested us, on our return to town, to stop at a service station where he was known and ask the proprietor to come up with a new battery for him. He described himself as "retired military" and explained that "after being shot at for 20 years" it was about time for a man to "sit himself down in the woods for a while." Mr. Bonaparte therefore intended to winter where he was camped, a short distance from where we were working. This led me to suppose that Mr. Bonaparte was a man after my own heart. I informed him that I myself had spent a couple of winters holed up [illegible] and therefore understood his sympathies

his intentions. In this way I apparently won his affection, because he now became decidedly conversational, whereas he had previously been somewhat distant. Much of the conversation was of a routine nature not worth reporting here. The interesting part was a series of astonishing revelations that Mr. Bonaparte made to me in a low, confidential tone — out of the hearing of Glen, whom he perhaps did not regard as fully trustworthy. Mr. Bonaparte proved to be a veritable mine of secret information on Russian espionage activities in the United States. He commenced with the allegation that the Z-Up Ranch is "crawling with Russian KGB." He suggested that I ought to report this to the local sheriff's deputy. "But I don't think he'll do anything about it anyway — I think he's kinda chicken."

He mentioned that there were about 25 KGB agents around Lincoln. Wishing to show polite interest, I asked him what the KGB were doing there, and he said "They're gunning for Mike; that's why I'm up here. But if any of them come up here they won't go down again, I'll guarantee you."

He went on to describe some of the atrocities committed by the KGB. Most shocking was the fact that the KGB had entered the homes of certain persons and assassinated them; then, putting "this plastic stuff" on their faces to make themselves look like the regular people, they had assumed the identities of the assassinated persons, so that nothing was suspected until the KGB was gone and the corpses were found in the basement. Mr. Bonaparte evidently was well qualified to speak on these matters. By his own account he was formerly a Texas Ranger and the Rangers have been among the [illegible]

schemes of the KGB. Moreover, it would seem that during much of his military career Mr. Bonaparte was pitted against the KGB. He claimed to be the man who started the Moscow riots of 1956 in which (he said) the KGB headquarters were torn down. And after certain generals and other highly placed persons had sold ambassadorships to a group of KGB agents, "We cleaned out a nest of them [KGB]. We just cut their throats and sent their ambassadorship papers back to Moscow. Heh, heh, heh." It was flattering that Mr. Bonaparte judged me to be worthy of such confidences. Still, the look of suspicion never left his eyes, and I began to feel somewhat uncomfortable in his presence. He was carrying a pistol, and neither Glen nor I was armed. In a lifetime of fighting the KGB, Mr. Bonaparte might have become overzealous. He might be inclined, on insufficient grounds, to suspect Glen and me of being KGB agents, and, accustomed to the bloody in-fighting of the espionage business, he might be a little too precipitous in defending himself. I therefore made every effort to seem interested in and concerned about his revelations. Among other things, the KGB has killed 2 or 3 hundred children in the United States; 2 local residents whose appearance was described to me are KGB; high officials of the Fish and Game Dept. illegally kill elk and sell them to eastern restaurants; the Texas, Wyoming, Tennessee, and other State Rangers are sent to Nepal to train with Nepalese Ghurkas; an air force base recently "cleaned up" had harbored 108 KGB; and Nelson Rockefeller is the only man around who has more money than Mr. Bonaparte. Furthermore, Mr. Bonaparte knows [illegible]

worth, namely, 600 trillion trillion dollars. All this information certainly makes the state of the nation seem frightful. Next thing you know, the KGB will make Mrs. Bompante out to be a dangerous paranoiac and have him confined to an institution.

March 27: I am now a regular gold-bonded, certified deer-poacher. This morning was ideal for poaching. Quite cold and windy, and poor visibility because of the blowing snow. The sort of morning when nobody but me is out on the ridges. While following their tracks a little distance, I found that same herd of mule deer I'd first seen them when 3 of them heard me or smelled me and ran a short distance with their heads up, alert. But they soon calmed down and began grazing again. They were not leaping off, but with the wind I'd hoped to get closer before shooting. So I dropped to my hands and knees and crawled through the snow on hands and knees, a method I found was impossible to maintain because of the shallow snow. When I crested the top of the ridge I rose to a sitting position, picked a convenient deer, and shot it with the scope's crosshairs on the deer's point-blank .22 bullet. The deer jumped, and it and the other deer raised their heads and stared and began milling around a little, & remained quiet, and the deer calmed down and began grazing again — but not the deer I had shot, which moved off behind the other deer, where I couldn't see it. After a little while the wind shifted so that it was blowing from me to the deer. They immediately became alarmed and moved off. (Ernest Thompson Seton says that Mule deer, in contrast to whitetails, depend primarily on hearing rather than scent for warning.) But the deer I had shot

apparently those deer never did see me or learn where I was, I suppose little more than my head would have been visible to them.

ignore scent, as this incident shows. Ideally, one should move into the wind in deer hunting, but the winds are so shifting and inconstant around here that it is hard to put that dictum into practice.) Anyway, I began following along the track of the herd, and there, on the other side of where the herd had been, my deer lay dying. I finished it with a bullet in the brain. Lest anyone sneer at the virtues of the .22, I might mention that my original shot went clean through the deer and out the other side. This was at a range of, say, 100–150 ft. All this happened on a steep, mostly open hillside. The visibility was poor enough so that I was hardly likely to be seen, but, to be safe, I made haste to drag the deer down into a grove of trees — a steep place where a car must be rare that anyone goes. I found it was a doe — since the bucks don't have antlers at this time I did not know until I killed it. It had very little fat on it, but was not emaciated — had plenty of muscle. This was a disappointment. Of course I had realized that the deer were likely to be lean at this time, but since there seemed to be plenty of grass on those steep, south-facing hillsides where wind and sun keep the snow from getting deep, and since this is said to have been a mild winter, I had hoped they might have some fat on them. If I had known they were this lean, I probably would not have killed one, as my object was not merely to get protein (rabbits will do for that) but to get calories to enable me to conserve my rice, flour, etc. Oh, well. I learned something anyway. Of course, I can get 3 square meals out of that deer, anyway what with the internal organs and the fat there is [illegible]

Wow. It gets very cold up there, what with the wind. I nearly froze my poor little fingers off butchering that deer. I brought home the head, the internal organs, and a hind leg in my pack, and buried the rest of the meat in snow to pick up later. Also I will get the hide later. My lunch today consisted almost exclusively of half that deer's liver, sliced and fried. It was so good and I was so hungry after the morning's exertion that I now wish I had fried up the whole liver. P.S. I did fry up the rest of it when I got home.

See my remarks on rabbit territoriality, Dec 24. While I was in the city I reviewed Seton's remarks on rabbit territories. He says each rabbit spends its whole life in a limited territory (barring severe emergencies), but he never says that different rabbit territories are mutually exclusive. With regard to coyotes, he says explicitly that the territories of different groups of coyotes overlap considerably, and he emphasizes the same thing about rabbits, if my memory serves. A certain dogmatic jerk by the name of Robert Andrey should pay attention to that.

I forgot to mention that my home-made parka was invaluable for wearing while I was working on the deer in that chill wind. This deer, by the way, had a few cysts — I suppose tapeworm — about the intestines. It also had nostegnids — tapeworm greenish-yellow grubs in the nasal cavity. For supper I had just deer parts — tongue (it was fat!), heart, etc. As the tongue was somewhat tough, I conclude the deer was not young. Speaking of parasites, I learned from Seton's work that those nostegnids — I found them that were lost —

simmer were larvae of the bot-fly. Judging from tracks, a weasel is frequenting the space under the cabin. Good. Keep the mice away. I am always a bit uneasy lest they find a way to get into the cabin, where they could wreak havoc.

March 28: 6° below zero this morning at dawn. Lunch and supper yesterday, and breakfast this morning were almost all deer, and I still have enough fat stuff left for more all-meat meals.

March 29: I find I was mistaken in describing that deer as lean. It had very little fat layered under the skin. But I found lots of fat around the eyes and ears, around the pelvis, parts of the ribs, and other places. I still have lots of straight-venison meals coming. Yesterday the only civilized food I had was a little salt and pepper, 4 dates, 3 heaping spoons sugar, and a can of tomatoes. The rest was rabbit (I had 2 rabbits left from before I killed the deer), flesh and internal organs of deer, fir-needle tea, and a sprig of sagebrush for seasoning. Of course, when I say the deer was not lean, I surely mean it had a lot more fat than I thought at first. It does not compare with an autumn-killed deer.

March 30: Yesterday my only civilized food was salt and pepper, 5 dates, 4 heaping spoons sugar, 2 of powdered milk, and half a one of cocoa. Rest was deer, rabbit, fir-needle tea and a sprig of sagebrush. The deer is on the tough side, and, alas, my poor old teeth are barely up to it. The upper molars get sore around the roots from chewing tough stuff.

March 31: Yesterday my only civilized food came from salt, pepper, and parsley flakes (which didn't seem to affect the flavor of the soup anyway) was 5 dates, a small can of mandarin oranges, 4 heaping spoons of sugar, 2 of powdered milk, half a one of cocoa [illegible] and fir-needle tea. The

best part of this eating is the soup left from boiling the meat. With blood and fat added, it is very rich, and in fact might better be called gravy than soup. Today for breakfast I had cold venison, 5 dates, and tea (2 spoons sugar, 2 milk ½ cocoa); for lunch, venison and soup therefrom, and for needle tea (2 spoons sugar). So for more than 4 days I ate mostly just wild meat, and found the diet satisfactory. Deducting the value of the small amount of civilized stuff I ate, I figure that one could live on a spring-killed deer like that for at least 3½ days. (Of course there's lots of lean meat left — not good for an exclusive diet.) The fawn I killed last fall had enough fat to be good for probably 10 days' exclusive diet. Anyhow, this afternoon I took a hind leg of that deer down to the Lees — lean stuff of lesser value to me. I left the meat in the woods and went down to see if the coast was clear. The Lees did indeed have a visitor, a very old man named Cirl McCann, with whom Kenneth was talking about the old days, mules and horses and so forth. Kenneth said he always thought he had been born 100 years too late, and McCann said he felt the same way. McCann expressed himself in a much more educated way than Kenneth. Kenneth said he was the last of the real old-timers left around here. Anyway, after McCann was gone, I went and got the venison for the Lees. They seemed glad to get it — in fact, before I mentioned the venison Irene had been telling me that they were running out of meat and she would have to buy some. Of course, my motives were not entirely altruistic. I figured they would offer me supper, and then

surplus garden vegetables. And indeed they did — and fed me a good meal besides — I took home 2 large jars of home-canned sourkraut, 9 or 10 lb. of potatoes, and 3 large turnips. So if you figure that deer leg as given in barter for the vegetables, I will be getting a lot more free eating for that deer than 3½ days' worth. So I sat and played pinochle with the Lees for a few hours, then went home and had a bedtime snack of cold boiled venison washed down with vinegar and sugar-and-water, a tasty drink. This meat was from the back; it has aged some now and is quite tender enough for my poor little teeth. Good eating!

April 1. 2° above zero at dawn.

April 2. Fresh bobcat tracks not far from the cabin this morning. I didn't bother to trail it far, because the snow was so crumbly that I thought there was almost no chance of seeing it. The chipmunks are out of hibernation, though it is a late spring — still lots of snow. Have been having some very good steaks of venison, sourkraut, potatoes, and turnip trimmings (the main part of the turnip I eat raw, for vitamins). I have thus been eating almost for nothing, the only significant expense, really, being the can of fruit that I have every other day. But I find it hard to do without the taste of fruit, though I get my vitamin C in other ways (and canned fruit doesn't have a hell of a lot of vitamin C anyway).

April 3. Went up on the ridge today to fetch down the rest of the deer meat. It was still frozen solid. When I reached the end of the long climb up the [illegible] ridge I sat and rested for a few minutes [illegible]

the beauty of the scene. Forested hillsides and bare, open ones. Close to where my venison was buried in the snow, there was a herd of elk grazing peacefully. I cooked some of the foreleg meat today and found it fairly tough, unlike the tender back-meat that I have just finished eating. This may be partly because the meat would probably age more slowly while frozen solid. I'm still living mainly on meat and the Lees' potatoes. Heavy on the meat.

April 6: For the last 10 days, including today, most of my food has never seen the inside of a supermarket. The main exceptions are: the 6 spoonfuls of cooking oil I have used each day since the fat part of the deer ran out (there has still been some fat on the meat I've eaten since then), and the can of fruit that I have had every other day. The rest has been mainly venison, and the potatoes, turnips, and sauerkraut from the Lees. The turnips and sauerkraut are gone by now, and after supper tonight I will have only a few little potatoes left; so tomorrow I'll go back to the usual stuff for my staple food. I have dried some of the venison for the summer.

April 8: Except for the back meat, I have hamburgered all that venison because it is pretty tough. I now have it all eaten up except a hind leg that I salted and hung up to cure. (You see, I have been eating a lot of meat! Up to a point, it seems, one can substitute lean meat for fats and carbohydrates as a source of calories.) That hind leg, I now find, has gotten pretty tender. For lunch I had boiled meat from that leg sliced and made up into sandwiches with part-rye bannock. Good! Washed it down with a quart of tea — needle tea.

April 11: My deer meat is nearly gone, so I went hunting today. Brought back nothing but a modest quantity of waterfowl. But I did track a badger to its den. I have never yet seen a badger, the animal being characteristic of the open prairie rather than of the woods and mountains. I began following what I thought was a porcupine trail, from the toed-in gait with short strides. Further on, however, the stride lengthened — too long, it seemed, for a porcupine — and I found some clear prints, definitely not porcupine tracks. I concluded from what I remembered from Mitch's guide that it was a badger (and confirmed this after I got home by checking the book). Anyhow, I followed the trail for maybe ¾ mile over some awkward slopes until it disappeared into a hole in the ground. Since the tracks went into the hole, but not out again, I concluded that Mr. Badger was at home, but I didn't bother to knock, as I didn't think he would trouble himself to answer the door.

April 12: Went hunting again today up on the ridge and brought back one grouse. Had crusted snow, a bad hunting condition. But inspiringly beautiful weather. A strap of my snowshoe harness broke while I was out. Simply tying the ends together in a square knot would have made the strap too short, so I twisted the ends together, and tightly lashed the joint with a bit of string. This arrangement proved surprisingly strong. But I'd better devise some more permanent repair.

April 15: Made a new snowshoe strap from an old belt that was no good as a belt any more. Finally I had a success at trapping! In the past I have tried to trap rabbits by setting snares in my steel traps in their trails, but they are not very consistent in their use of trails,

and they are apt to walk right over the trap without just happening to put their foot on the pedal. Yesterday I did this & found a place where, from tracks and droppings and chewings, it was clear that rabbits were in the habit of hanging out — under a snag that had some green needles on it. All the green needles within reach of the rabbits had been eaten, so I cut a sprig of fir foliage and put it down in the rabbit hangout and sprinkled a little salt on it to make it more attractive to put the trap where the rabbits would have to sit to eat this foliage. I figured they would move around to eat different parts of the foliage and thus have many chances to step on the pedal & set the trap, as I was anxious to trap a bunny because (under conditions (hard, crunchy crust on which the rabbits leave no tracks in many places) had made my hunting unsuccessful so that I had no meat yesterday but a small piece of leftover grouse. This morning I found a rabbit caught by a forefoot in my trap. Its coat was already turning brown in patches. It made a squeak of fear having a Donald Duck tonal quality. I felt very sorry for it, sitting there, for hours no doubt, with its foot in the trap. But I suppose I will soon get calloused to it — I recall having felt very sorry for the first carp I ever shot with an arrow. Today I went to Helena on the Lincoln Transportation Company truck to get licence plates for my pickup. While there I invested 12 bucks on a meat grinder. Hamburgerizing the tough stuff with a hatchet is very time consuming, and chewing it unhamburgerized is too much for my miserable teeth. April 14th — Last night I was out hunting for 5½ hours & there

was some snow yesterday, so tracking was good in the earlier part of the morning. I saw fresh bear tracks. Brought home one spruce grouse and one rabbit, both of which I got by tracking. One shot each, of course. What I want, damn it, is a porcupine. But the best porcupine hunting is on the other side of the road, but I hate like poison to go over there now, because it is now so crowded between here and the road, and also I [redacted] to be careful not to be seen violating the no-trespassing signs.

April 18: Using the same method as last time, but in a different place, I trapped another rabbit. So it worked twice in a row.

April 20: Went across Poorman Creek, violating the No-Trespassing signs as it now necessary to get to the good porcupine country. Soon located one by its litter under the tree and killed it with one shot. Medium-sized porcupine. Then I went for a walk, as it was a beautiful day. The way to distinguish the bits of bark left under a tree by porcupine chewing from those produced by woodpecker work! As woodpeckers work on dead wood, the bark knocked down by them is dead; but porcupines eat live bark, so the pieces of bark they drop will generally show some green, or at any rate some live tissue on the inside. Saw two grouse, but got a shot at neither.

April 21: Today I ground up my porcupine using my new meat grinder, which turns out to be worthless. By the time I finished — or nearly finished — grinding up that meat, a certain part on that grinder had worn down to such an extent (an incredibly short time — there must be something wrong in the [illegible])

that the thing is no longer usable. This is extremely frustrating and enraging. Time after time after time things go wrong in one's dealings with society — one gets cheated, crowded, taken advantage of, tied down with rules, regulations and red tape. And of course one is prohibited from attempting to retaliate. There is a guarantee on the grinder, but I've had too much experience with such guarantees in the past. You have to send the thing back to the factory. Of course I would have to take the Lincoln to do that, and the postage on a heavy thing like that will be a dollar or two, and then there's a very good chance that the new replacement will be no better than the old. So after you have sent the thing back and forth a few times, you will have spent the price of it in postage and the cost of trips to town.

April 23: Spring cleaning today. Have the place all nicely put in order and swept out. This morning I went and got some watercress, then had a first-class lunch: porcupine meat, porcupine and watercress soup, bannock, cooking oil, and a can of peaches. But that was the last of the porcupine, and I have no more meat on hand, hunting and hiking conditions being execrable because of the half-melted snow.

April 25: A large and stately old tree on the edge of our property, across the stream, just fell. I saw it fall. I figured it was going to fall soon. The trunk was badly split, and there is a heavy snowfall going on right now. The tree was getting heavily laden with snow, and I could hear it cracking from time to time.

April 26: Fantastically heavy fall of snow yesterday

and today — and it's still coming down. I thought it would be good hunting conditions this morning, but I was wrong for 2 reasons. First, the snow, I found, was moist and heavy, but nevertheless very soft, so that the snowshoes sank in a good foot at every step. Thus walking was very arduous. Second, after I was halfway up the ridge the snow started coming down heavily again. The animals don't move around much when it is snowing heavily, and of course the tracks made earlier get covered up, so there are no tracks to follow. So I had about 4 hours of hard going all for nothing. Since the temperature was only about freezing, the falling snow was wet and I got soaked to the skin. Still, it was invigorating in a way, and I am feeling pretty cheerful sitting here in front of my nice warm stove even though I don't have any meat. Oh well, I like beans anyway.

April 28th. It took me 6 hours of hard hunting to get it but there's no shortage of meat now! I got one rabbit, one blue grouse, and one good-sized porcupine. I got both the rabbit and the grouse by tracking, the porcupine by merely finding its kitten under the trees. It took me 2 shots to get the porcupine, for the usual reason: it was hard to be sure where its head was. I found that my first shot passed through both the animal's forearms. Naturally I got the rabbit and the grouse neatly with one shot each. All this was made possible by the fact that it was cold enough this morning to firm up the snow, so that the snowshoeing was good; yet there was an inch or 2 of fresh fluffy stuff on top, for good tracking. But by the time I got home the snowshoeing was already starting to get bad again. No telling when I'll be able to hunt again. After that I

time of year the snow will presumably be wet and sticky most of the time; and it will probably take forever for the snow to melt off, since so much of it fell, and the weather seems inclined to stay cloudy. I saw many fir trees, including a few big ones, that had fallen — broken by the weight of this extraordinary snow. The stuff was wet and sticky, you see, so that it stuck to the trees and built up much more weight on them than dry snow would have done.

April 30. Good hunting conditions again this morning. I went up on the ridge and got a rabbit and a small porcupine, each killed neatly with a shot in the head, of course. So I'll be eating lots of meat for the next few days.

May 1. May Day! Beautiful morning, lovely blue sky and sunshine for a change. I sneaked across Poorman Creek and cut myself a couple of pieces of straight juniper. One I will probably make into a pick handle, and I thought I might as well get the other while I was there and let it season so I can use it when needed. Parts of the inner wood are rose-colored. The wood has a beautiful fragrance. After I cut the wood I went for a short walk, just because everything was so fine outside. Now, unfortunately, it is clouding up again. Wish that sun would stay! May first and still the ground is entirely covered with a thick layer of snow. This is getting ridiculous!

Later: has been partly cloudy today, but more sun than clouds. I had a practically all-wild lunch: porcupine bacon, porcupine meat in the soup (it was reboiled twice), and fir needle tea.

(civilized foods: bit of salt and pepper, 3 spoons of sugar in the fir-needle tea.) This lunch satisfied my hunger thoroughly, which is more than I can say for some of the lunches I have snacked here.

May 3: Spring is here at last! (I think.) Good deal of cloudiness, but the sun is also breaking through a good deal, and, best of all, there is a lovely warm breeze. Later in the afternoon I went down to see the Lees. I figured they would give me some potatoes that they said last time they were just going to throw out anyway, and they did — 10 or 15 pounds. Also, I wanted to call Kenny Hoffner about getting a job with him this summer, but the only call I could get was a busy signal. So played pinochle with the Lees for a couple of hours. Well, fuck it. I don't need any goddamn job. I would just as soon spend the summer back in the hills living on poached venison.

May 4: Snow again today, damn it!

May 5: Shot a rabbit today.

May 6: On a number of recent occasions I have heard the noise of some rodent chewing on things somewhere around or under the cabin. I suspected a certain squirrel as the culprit, but wasn't sure if it was chewing on the cabin itself or merely on some scraps of plywood I have around. Today, however, I definitely caught that squirrel chewing on the understructure of the cabin. Such behavior seems uncharacteristic of squirrels. Anyhow, out came the old .22 and I plugged it through the chest. Can use the meat. I don't like to shoot animals by the cabin, because I like to have them come around so I can watch them; but of course I can't let them eat the cabin out from under me.

April 11 to [illegible] about the weather the last few

days! Rain or wet snow falling most of the time, snowshoeing conditions hopeless, but still too much snow left to go far without snowshoes. So I am almost confined to the cabin.

May 11: At long last, yesterday and today it didn't rain (but it's now clouding up again). So I went for a walk this morning (but couldn't go very far because most of the ground is still clotted up with wet snow). I brought back a fair gathering of wild vegetables, principally wild onions and very young dandelions. When I got back I found that my steel trap under the cabin (I set it there because I had continued to hear rodents chewing under there) had caught a squirrel. With lunch I had a soup made from the squirrel and the wild vegetables. Man, was that good! The vegetables cooked up nice and tender. First meat I've eaten since May 7.

May 12: This morning I went to another place and got more onions and dandelions, and shot a squirrel, so that I had another delicious squirrel-vegetable soup with lunch. The snow is sufficiently melted off near the cabin now so that I tried to get my pickup out this afternoon, but all I did was get stuck in the mud. In the process I inadvertantly evicted a mouse who had made his nest somewhere in the mysterious innards of the truck. He cowered under a bit of dead wood and I got a good, close leisurely look at him.

May 14: The most wonderful weather the last 2 days! lots of nice hot sunshine. Had very pleasant morning walks both yesterday and today. Yesterday I brought back lots of dandelions and onions and I had plenty of

vegetables to eat (plenty of work cleaning them, too) but no meat. Today I didn't walk far from home, but brought back a decent quantity of dandelions and onions, one squirrel and a large blue grouse. With lunch had a very tasty soup made from the squirrel and the innards of the grouse and most of the onions and dandelions. I discovered a new feature within a quarter mile or so of the cabin. I had previously noticed at one place the traces of a narrow, very old road on the hillside N. of the cabin. Today I traced out the route of it (pretty faint in places) and it led me to a place which seems to be a mineshaft that I didn't know about, though I can't be sure, since if it is a mineshaft, the entrance is all caved in. Maybe I'll go poking around there some time and find out for sure. This weather is joyous, and it is very pleasant to have all these vegetables.

May 20: Yesterday with lunch I had a fine vegetable — squirrel soup: dandelions, wild onions, Erythronium, and yellow violet leaves. Also, salads with lunch and supper — wild onion and yellow violet. Well, I'm glad I got all those vegetables when I could, because right now there's 6 inches of snow on the ground and it's still coming down — heavily. I got the pickup out of the mud, by the way, but it isn't going anywhere anyway. Battery finally gave out.

May 22: Today I am 33 years old. I had my trap set under the cabin because I have had continued trouble with squirrels gnawing on the underpinnings of my castle. This afternoon on returning from a short walk for wild vegetables, I found a rabbit caught in the trap. There was too much blood. I don't like to kill

rabbits at the cabin, because I like to watch them when they come around. Besides, there was a pregnant female that would have produced 3 more bunnies in her gray summer coat already, though felt still very white. But the meat will be very welcome. The snow is off near the cabin, but there is still enough around to be a great obstacle to any longish hunt, and anyhow I have been occupied to some degree in trying to get my truck out and so forth. Made a trip yesterday to Helena with Lincoln Transportation Co. and got a [illegible] battery for $10, so truck now runs. Am sure I have been hungry for meat — have my supply very sparingly, as I don't have much left.

May 30: Today I discovered a good patch of bitterroot on the face of Baldy, and had a pretty fair quantity of it for lunch, boiled with canned venison and an assortment of greens including bitterroot greens. Have been eating lots of wild vegetables of late.

June 1: Today I went out a-roving and shot a blue grouse up on the ridge. Access to much of the high country is still barred by snowdrifts. I was recently looking at the deed to our property and observed that the gulch we are in is named Florence Gulch. This name is not marked on the Forest Service map.

June 2: This evening I went out salad gathering, took my rifle just in case, and was glad I did because I got a blue grouse. This was probably the fattest grouse I ever killed. Also, it had an egg in it, seemingly just ready to be laid. I love eggs. I have been usually having 2 generous salads

a day the last few days. These salads, dressed with oil, vinegar, and a pinch of salt, are delicious, especially when they contain onions, as they usually do. Other common ingredients are: yellow violet leaves, Erythronium leaves, dandelion leaves, sweet cicely, sheep sorrel. I might add that I had a particularly tasty stew with supper tonight, consisting of ground grouse meat, rice, and greens (predominantly nettle tops). I got my money back on that bad meat grinder and bought one of a different brand, which so far seems to work OK. But it cost me 20 bucks.

June 3: Had the most delicious lunch and supper today. Lunch: wild salad with oil, vinegar, salt; grouse meat and big gobs of tasty yellow fat from the grouse; lots of cooked greens (mostly dock and nettles); soup from cooking grouse and greens; small fish; cake of corn bread; can of raspberry-cranberry sauce. Supper: wild salad with oil, vinegar, salt; grouse breast (wondrously tender!); soup of ground grouse, ½ cup rice, and lots of greens; a little cocoa for dessert.

June 23: Just recently I was out camping for about 10 days altogether. This trip was pretty much a failure. I was driven home first by sickness (some strange fever that lasted only 3 days), then again by a rainy spell so bad that one couldn't hunt or do anything so that it wasn't worthwhile to stay out. Last few days I have been watching a bird's nest on the ground in the yard. A few days ago there were 4 speckled eggs in it — now baby birds that are putting on feathers already. Weather has been disgusting ever since late March. Fantastic amount of precipitation — terrible floods in the valley — the roads closed for a few days. I don't mind heavy rains, but when it keeps up for 3 months with

very few clear days, it starts to get you down.

July 6: Weather has been fine now for some days. This morning I went up to run on Humbug Contour Road. On the way back I found a porcupine, which took refuge under some logs. I had no gun, no rope, pack, or other convenient way to carry the animal home, and I was unable to get the porcupine out of his refuge. So I blockaded him with logs and sticks in such a way that I figured he could not get out without prolonged effort. I had visions of delicious porcupine meatballs. I went home and got my gun, pack, and some matches incase I might have to use fire to get the porcupine out of there. As I was hiking back up to Humbug Contour Road again, I saw someone driving up the road in a pickup. That of course screwed up my plans. It would be impossible to get to the porcupine without being seen by the guy, if I could get across a certain open area without being seen, but the route is arduous, and after running 4 miles, walking five, with almost nothing to eat, I didn't much feel like undertaking it. I explain again why I am so anxious to avoid meeting people in such situations — for practical reasons I can't be other than ragged and rather dirty and in other ways my way of life makes me a curiosity — a freak. Which doesn't bother me in the least as long as I don't have to answer questions about it or be stared at. But, beyond that, ~~but~~ having to meet people — civilized people, that is, which is the only kind left — means that I haven't succeeded in severing connections with organized society. (Only Kenny Lee is alright, [illegible] himself.) This is now

knowing is the crux of the whole matter — I will not be part of organized society. This is both a matter of principle and due to the fact that organized society deprives one of certain profound satisfactions that I have found can be obtained when one severs connections with it — as I have been able to do only temporarily and incompletely, of course. But now I am unable to escape civilization even to the extent that I did the first year or 2 here — things are closing in all around me. The latest being the post-cutting and some Forest Service activities going on in the Saddlebags Hunchbug Contour.

July 11: Yesterday I found the first wild strawberries of the year — a good 10 days late, since you ordinarily find them by July 1 or before. Today I sneaked past the NO TRESPASSING signs to go on the other side of Poorman Creek. Brought back 1¼ cups camas, a couple of squirrels, and some mint. I have been having lots of mint tea lately — I love it. Also I've been eating salads of Yellow Monkey Flower. No meat but an occasional squirrel. Things seem so closed-in around here now — it hardly seems as if there's any place left to hunt. 3 little successes: I had a blocked skin gland that kept forming plugs of wax. Last few months it usually had a red, irritated appearance, so I thought it should be removed. Doctors are expensive, so I made a small scalpel by cutting a sliver from a razor blade and setting it in a wooden handle. I boiled my instruments, then (this was in May) taking some snow from a lingering patch, I put a snow pack on the spot to partially numb it and reduce bleeding; then I cut out the spot. It healed nicely, no sign of infection, and now there's just a little pink scar. (2) I found an old iron trunk, small, rectangular, [illegible]

Hawkes. I had a welder cut off one side and cut a 6" hole in another side. I obtained a piece of sheet metal from one of these old cars around here, cut it to shape by a makeshift process, and made a door for the thing. So now I have a nice little stove that I will put in a little tent that I plan to make as a winter camp. Hope it will work OK! (3) In winter I can eat beans OK, but the last two summers I found that beans give me excessive gas and belches of a most unpleasant flavor. Following a hint I had somewhere, I tried swallowing several small pieces of charcoal, like pills, every time I eat beans. (Charcoal absorbs gasses.) This seems to cure the problem completely. At least, I've tried it twice, and it worked both times.

July 13: Was out today, got caught in a heavy rain, shot one squirrel, and, for the first time, found a giant puffball in fresh, edible condition. I sliced it and fried it, and it was tasty. It was about 6" in maximum diameter, 4" in minimum diameter, and made a substantial serving of mushroom.

July 15: Identified a new plant today — Twinflower, Linnaea borealis — said to have been Linnaeus's favorite flower. Beautiful, delicate little pink things.

July 17: At last — I have had ample meat yesterday and today. I shot that rockchuck that had taken up residence in our outcrop because I figured Williams or Mason would be likely to shoot it anyway (and leave it to rot); and I have been hard up for meat. It was pretty fat, and meaty. For yesterday's supper I had a stew of [illegible] rice, a miscellany of herbs, and

ground rockchuck meat; then 5½ cups of wild strawberries, the last part of them sweetened with 1 spoon of sugar. Today for supper I'll have a salad of yellow monkeyflower, a stew of ¼ cup rice and lots of greens and lots of ground chuck meat, and a little over a quart of wild strawberries, the last part of which I will sweeten with 2 spoons sugar. With lunch, by the way, I had a small amount of gooseberry jam — and of course salad and mint tea as usual. The strawberry crop is particularly abundant this year. While I was picking them today I saw some people coming along picking them — I think guests of those Mason cocksuckers. I don't know whether they had yet seen me or not, but they weren't looking my way, so I stole away quietly to another part of the field where they wouldn't see me. The picking was not nearly as good at the new place. Then later, 2 peckers rode by on a trailbike on Humbug contour road, not far away.

July 24: This strawberry crop is just fantastic. I keep thinking the crop has reached its peak and will begin to fade out, but every time I go up there the picking seems better and the berries sweeter. Last evening I went and picked 2½ quarts (which took 3½ hours). I ate a quart and a half with supper and the other quart with breakfast this morning. A couple of days ago that jerk Glen Williams asked me to go out and work with him the next day. I figured I ought to do it because I am so short of cash, so I did and made 24 bucks, which is unusual because I generally make very little when I go with him

But I didn't want to go the next day because, first, there was a very good chance I would make much less $ the second day (as usual), second, I had projects of my own in hand that I hated to put off, and third, I find that guy's company very unpleasant. He is the most insufferable bore — talks almost constantly, droning on and on about inconsequential little affairs of his — he paid so and so much for a bearing and it took him so and so many hours to put it in — and I have to sit there and pretend to listen. He also has a habit of scornfully running down anyone who is so low that Gods can feel superior to him. He got mad when I told him I wasn't going with him the second day. I guess when I agreed to work the one day he developed fond visions of a semi-vacation for the rest of the few days it will take him to finish this patch of posts. He organizes his work inefficiently and I haven't yet seen him put in a good square day's work, except maybe once. So altogether I find it very unpleasant to work with him.

Aug. 1. I identified a new plant today — "Bitter-and-eggs", Linaria vulgaris. In recent weeks I have been having some especially good lunches — yellow monkey flower and other herbs for salad, mint in tea, bannock, and sometimes berries for dessert. My outdoor oven makes much better bread than I can bake on the ash plate of my stove.

Aug. 3: Strawberries are fading now, but I'm getting as many soapberries as I care to use. The berry season is about the only time of year when my appetite for fruit is properly satisfied. Today I

went running on Hamburg Contour Rd. Saw somebody drive in my direction a long way off, so I turned off the road — necessarily into a logged-over area. They saw me & when they got closer and stopped to watch me, but at least I didn't have to meet them. While I was out, I found a new edible plant — a member of the mustard family, as I could tell from the seed-pods and the odor of the crushed leaves. I couldn't find the species in my books. It has narrow, pointed leaves heavily tinged with red. The leaves are bitter, but crisp and succulent — they composed about half of my large salad today, and I found them good. Evening of the 31st I was down at the Lees. After I had gone some distance on the way home I found that their kitten was following me. It must have followed the wrong person by mistake, as it began meowing as if frightened. When I got home I coaxed it into the cabin and gave it some milk, after which it became friendly. I put it outside for the night, thinking to take it home in the morning — and if it wandered off and got lost meanwhile, tough luck. I wasn't about to let it spend the night in the cabin as I didn't know if it was housebroken and it had a persistent preference for getting up on my bed. In the morning it was gone. This morning when I got home, I heard something meowing in the brush near the cabin. The kitten, of course, who had spend 2 nights lost in the woods and seemed very disconsolate. After some cooing I got my hands on it and brought it into the cabin. I gave it some milk, but it only drank a little. It seemed much more interested in getting up on the bed and rubbing itself against the blankets and against me, and it was soon purring loudly. I then took it back down to the Lees. As soon as I took it outside it began meowing again and struggled to get out of my hands. It didn't give me a lot of

trouble — took fright at things and bolted into the bushes twice, and I got scratched a little. When I finally got it to its home it jumped out of my arms and ran into its box. || Soapberries I think are one of the prettiest of all berries to look at.

Aug 4: Concerning the new edible plant I found yesterday: While picking green gooseberries this morning here in Florence Gulch, I found several more plants of it, and again it comprised about half of my large luncheon salad. Now that I am alert to it I suppose I will be noticing more of it. These plants did not have the reddishness in the leaves, except very slightly in one. This was a good salad, and, pending identification of the species, I guess I will call it "lance-leaf mustard".

Aug. 13: Yesterday I went up Fields Gulch to get huckleberries. The berries were just at their peak, the picking was superb, and I brought back a gallon. Also I got a spruce grouse on the way home. It was such a beautiful and joyous morning to be out. But unfortunately, a short while after I started picking, some people pulled in there to cut firewood. I don't think they saw me, so I just stayed in my little corner of the logged-over area and kept picking; but of course my fun was spoiled. I had wanted to get two gallons, but the presence of these people made me nervous, so I quit when I had one gallon. I can't escape the impression that these woods are getting more crowded and frequented around here. Within reasonably convenient distances of the cabin there almost seems nowhere to turn. It gets me upset. But by the time I got home I was in a good mood again because I had a good haul of wild goodies. For dessert after supper last night I had a whole quart of huckleberries. I had a sumptuous lunch today: a large salad, grouse, home-made bread, & [illegible] soup from the

grouse with wild greens, onion flowers, and a small amount of rice, and again a whole quart of huckleberries. The berries are sweet and there is no temptation to add sugar. Also, with supper last night, I tried tea from Ceanothus velutinus, recommended in Kirk's book. I found it fairly good, if ample sugar is used.

Aug 15. Yesterday I went across Poorman Creek to look for huckleberries on a nearby hillside, but I found I was too late and only got 1½ cups. On the way back I gave my right ankle a nasty sprain on a piece of logging debris. Also, I shot a squirrel, and, for the first time, a ground squirrel — either Columbian or Richardson's; I can't figure out which it is. Larger than a red squirrel, but has no more meat than a red squirrel because much of the animal is just guts. However, it had lots of fat on it, was pretty tender, and good eating. I recall a few days ago a moth which I watched with particular pleasure when it lighted on me as I was sitting in the sun under our ponderosa. It had grey wings, with spots — 2 on the front wing and one on the back — each spot consisting of a tiny white dot surrounded by a thick black band and that in turn surrounded by a narrower band the color of tarnished copper. Those spots caught my fancy, and I thought it more pleasant to look at than many brighter-colored lepidoptera. Also, yesterday, for the first time, I found water-hemlock as I take it to be — growing near the little pond.

Aug 16. Today I found a species of the mint family that I have not previously used — field mint, Mentha arvensis. I used it for tea and found it fairly good, but not so good as horse mint. The scientific name of this bone [illegible] the west is Agastache urticifolia, and I

consider that it makes the best tea I know, with the possible exception of Labrador tea.
Aug. 17: Today I identified Indian paintbrush, Castilleja miniata. Some of these plants I mention that I've identified I have very likely identified before, and then forgotten.
Aug. 18. I had two salads with lunch today, the usual one and another consisting of the flowering heads of the Indian paintbrush mentioned above, which, as I discovered by consulting my book, are edible. It made a pretty fair salad, not as tender as might be hoped, but with very little bitterness. The taste was reminiscent of yellow monkey flower, which is not surprising, since both plants belong to the same family, namely, the figwort family. I always enjoy learning a new edible plant. Later — Oh joy! I have just learned still another edible plant! Two in one day. Name the picture of Indian paintbrush in the book I noticed a picture of another plant that looked somewhat familiar, so I went out into our patch of swamp, and there it was — Brookline (Veronica sp.). Unfortunately it was rather sparsely distributed there, but I gathered enough for a small salad with supper. It has a pungency reminiscent of watercress, is somewhat bitter, and somewhat astringent; also the leaves are somewhat on the tough side (but by no means excessively so). These qualities are not marked enough to make the plant unpleasant — they only spice it; with oil and salt I found it distinctly pleasant eating. What joy is so peaceful and innocent as herb-gathering? I was particularly pleased to learn brookline because it is one of those plants whose description I have read over and over again in Fernald and Kinsey's book. These plants have acquired a kind of romance for me and I am always particularly pleased when I

learn another one of them. Also, I like the name "brookline". I suppose I can be excused for having taken so long to recognize it — it is not a very conspicuous plant, and it grows in swampy places. Also I noticed another edible plant in the book, waterleaf, which I am pretty sure I saw in June. Too late for it now, but there's always another year.

Aug. 19: Today I found brookline much more abundant further up the creek, and I had a large salad of it with lunch. I like it. The weather has turned very wet again the last few days. I had wanted to take another hike, but it's no fun when things are this wet. And then there's my sprained ankle, too; but that is feeling much better now. I don't remember whether I've mentioned it, but my deerskin belt held up very poorly — lasted only 4 or 5 months. I'm still wearing it, but I now tie it around my waist. One peculiar disadvantage of brookline may be mentioned. The astringent sensation lingers in one's mouth for a considerable time after one has eaten it, and, somehow, due no doubt to some strange chemical property of the plant, this makes the rest of your meal have a sourish taste — which may or may not be objectionable, depending on the type of food. Hum! That water-hemlock I thought I found may have been the edible water-parsnip. I have just checked in Fernald and Kinsey's book — they say the water-parsnip has "ribbed or angled" umbel rays, the hemlock smooth ones. I think I had it reversed when I checked those plants. I'll have to go back and check again some time. Of course, water-parsnip is perhaps dangerous to use anyway; not only is there the danger of confusing it with water-hemlock, but the stems and leaves of water-parsnip are poisonous,

Aug 21: Some of the Irish potatoes that the Lees gave me last spring were sprouting, so I didn't want to eat them. Instead, I planted them — some around June 1 and some around July 1. Today I dug up one of the plants from June 1 and found four lovely, perfect, fresh, crisp potatoes — 4 medium-sized and one small. It seems almost like magic that such large chunks of food could be produced in such a short time. If the other plants all produce as well, I'll have a pretty good quantity of potatoes. I am cooking these potatoes with supper. Later: I cooked some of those potatoes with my beans, some I boiled with a quantity of the flowers and seed pods of wild onions. Both these concoctions were delicious! From time to time this summer we've had some instant mashed potatoes — but they surely do not compare with the fresh article. When you haven't had potatoes for a long time, a plain boiled potato is quite tasty! Good, good, good!

Aug 22: Today I went up on the ridge hoping to get a grouse, but with other plans in case I didn't. I didn't get a grouse, but I dug one even quart of Yampa, gathered some of the very abundant onion-flowers up there, and, to my surprise (since I thought the huckleberries were all gone) I found a nice little patch of huckleberries and brought home almost a quart of them. I was out 7½ or 8 hours, despite the miserable rainy weather, so I had a very late lunch. Had those delicious huckleberries for dessert after it. For supper I am cooking the Yampa. This continual rain, day after day, gets very tiresome after awhile. It is hard to believe. One almost wonders if human activities haven't in some way

screwed something up in the weather. We did have some nice weather in the latter part of July and earlier part of August, but other than that, ever since March — nothing but wet. Our little stream, usually reduced to a trickle by this time of year, is running as full as it usually does with the melting snow in the spring. Later: my supper consisted exclusively of Yampa. Now if I had just had some meat with it... But even so it was a pretty good supper. The flavor of Yampa is unquestionably "sans peur et sans reproche."

Aug. 23: I have just identified a mushroom, Agaricus sylvicola. Says A. H. Smith: "Not recommended. Though most of the Agaricus are edible and choice, some cause mild poisoning in some people". I don't think I'll mess with it, since it doesn't seem to be abundant enough to be worth the trouble of the careful experimentation which I would consider necessary (even without the "mild poisoning" remark, since misidentification of a mushroom could be pretty risky.

Aug. 24: Another sample of the kind of incident that has been occurring so much this summer that it sometimes frustrates me to tears. This morning, despite the cold and wet, I went to get huckleberries near the power-line that runs up Baldy. Just as I came on a splendid patch of berries, I spotted up ahead, on the very crude road that parallels the wire, some guys doing some kind of work connected with the power line. Of course, as usual, I was raggedly dressed and wearing footgear consisting of the soles of an old pair of sneakers held in place by elkhide thongs; so it would have been

unthinkable to meet them. But I wanted those berries so very badly that I started picking angrily, where they couldn't see me. But I heard them working closer and closer, and when they got too close for comfort, I left. So I only got one cup of those big fat lovely berries. This kind of thing hardly ever happened the first summer I was here. This summer it seems to happen almost every time I go out, unless I get well away from even the crudest roads, and there aren't many places left where one can get away from the roads. My supper tonight was just boiled potatoes from my garden with a few wild herbs thrown in — except that I washed it down with the ¾ cup coffee and some tea-like mint tea that I made at lunchtime.

Aug. 25: Bulk of my supper is again my own potatoes.

Aug. 26: Early this morning I went back to that huckleberry patch. The guys were working elsewhere now so I could pick undisturbed and spent some hours and got over 5 quarts out of just that little patch. Lovely picking! Also I shot a squirrel up there and got some salad on the way back. My supper tonight only cost me a nickel — for the .22 cartridge for the squirrel (inflation!) but consisted of potatoes from my garden, wild greens, the squirrel, and huckleberries for dessert. This was quite good.

Aug. 27: Damn it! Yesterday was a beautiful day — just one beautiful day. This morning — rain again.

Aug. 28: There was just that brief shower in the morning yesterday; then the weather cleared up and was fine until evening, when there were clouds

and thunder and a touch of rain. I went up on the ridge and shot 3 squirrels and a grouse, one shot each, of course, dug about 1½ pints of yampa, and got a good bagful of onion flowers. Those guys were working on that wire again, so I couldn't pick huckleberries. Grouse seem to become available on the ridgetops at this time of year, but, apparently, only in fair weather. I had a supper of which nothing was store-bought but a pinch of salt: a salad of yellow monkey flower and brookline, a stew of 3 squirrels, onion flowers, my own potatoes, and a small quantity of miscellaneous herbs, and huckleberries for dessert. A good meal! Today for lunch I had salad, bread, oil, legs and back of grouse, and a quart of huckleberries. Yesterday and again today I ate a handful of the berries of wild onion dogwood. These are bitter, but nevertheless, mildly pleasant to eat. Weather was fair this morning, but now it's pouring rain again. I have to eat up my huckleberries pretty fast, because they are already beginning to have a fermented smell (perhaps because wet when picked?). Later: I had a large, tasty and satisfying supper consisting entirely of wild stuff, except for a pinch of salt: The breast of that spruce grouse; salad of brookline and yellow monkey flower; boiled onion flowers with 2 small puffballs and a small quantity of wild herbs mixed in; boiled yampa; soup consisting of the water in which the grouse, yampa and onion flowers were all boiled (each separately); and a quart of huckleberries for dessert. A very good meal!

Aug 31 - Day before yesterday the bulk of my supper was my own potatoes. Yesterday morning I went out and shot 3 squirrels and for supper I had a wild salad

dressed with nothing, a delicious stew of squirrel, potatoes, and a few wild herbs, with a little salt and pepper, and for dessert a juice extracted by boiling dogwood berries, to which juice I added 2 spoons sugar, which made it almost palatable. Wild salad is getting hard to find now. The yellow monkey flower has mostly faded out. There was a good patch of Brookline up at the old cabin near Hinsley Canton, but the cows have trampled through that area.

Sept. 1. Gloomy weather, but no rain, and on the whole, fairly pleasant. I went up on the ridge, shot 2 squirrels, gathered a bag of cornflowers, and pretty far along the ridge, I down on a spur ridge, found excellent yampa digging, and that I got I think at least a quart and a half and maybe nearly 2 quarts (haven't measured it yet). It was a good day and I was enjoying it until—

As I was getting to think that I had nearly enough yampa, I heard a couple of loud bikes up on the ridge. They sounded close, and as if they were coming my way, so I hurriedly got myself and my stuff out of the open meadow and into the woods. (I have already explained why I don't like to meet people out in the woods.) Then I found that in my hurry I had lost the rag I use to pad my hand against the top of my root-digger. The bikes sounded as if they had taken another direction, so I went back to look for the rag. Then suddenly I heard the bikes loud and close again, so I scampered for the woods. Then the bikes went away again, they never did come into the meadow where I was, but I never did find that rag. Though

I looked for quite a while, in the intervals when the bikes did not sound close. I cannot describe to the reader how terribly this upset me. You may think it a minor incident; but you have to see it in context. I keep working harder and harder to escape from civilization but it keeps closing in more and more until I just have nowhere to turn. This incident took place up on the ridge tops, as far from roads and regular trails as one can get in a one-day excursion from the cabin. Until today, these ridge-tops were the one place where I felt secure from intrusion by this kind of garbage. This area was my last refuge, the last place I could turn to within reach of the cabin. And now..... I was so terribly upset that I believe that if those cock-suckers had come into the meadow while I was, I would have shot them. To top it off, after I got home some cocksucker rode right into my yard on a trailbike. I went out there with my 30-30, wondering if I would have the nerve to shoot the son of a bitch, and intending at least to scare him, but by the time I got out there he was gone. Later I spiked a big heavy pole across my road to block it; and I painted a Keep Out sign that I will nail up tomorrow. But I just don't know what to do or where to turn. I can't just hole up in the cabin all the time, and there seems to be nowhere left where I can hunt or gather roots or berries without looking over my shoulder all the time to see if the vile emissaries of civilization are about to break in on me. As for returning permanently to civilization I would rather die. I never thought civilization would close in on me so quickly — I thought

this place would be good for a few years yet. But this summer it seems that about every other time I have gone on a long walk I have been frustrated in one way or another by the presence of people. Where did they all come from so quickly?

Sept. 3: Yesterday I had an all-wild supper, except for a little salt and pepper — squirrel, boiled onion flowers, and a quart of yampa. But there was little pleasure or satisfaction in it because I am still upset about the wretched occurrence of Sept. 1. I feel like a religious person must feel about the desecration of his church or temple. I found, by the way, that I had 5½ cups of yampa — a little less than I had expected, but still quite a good gathering. This morning I had the other cup and a half for breakfast — mashed and mixed with 3 spoons of oil. The bulk of my supper was my own potatoes. I harvested all my potatoes today, as the plants were badly injured by frost last night, and I found one potato much chewed by a mole. At a guess, I would say I got about 15 lb. Counting what I ate earlier, I might have had a total of 25–30 lb. I suppose that's not bad for a first attempt on a little plot about 11'×11'.

Sept. 14: Just returned from 9 nights' camping out. When I dug my potatoes, I only partly dug up the plants, and I put them back in the ground. Now I find the plants largely killed by frost. I dug about half of them up with a spade and got another 2 or 3 lb. of potatoes. Some are old ones that I missed first time around, but some are little new ones produced by the plants in the mean time.

Sept 15 The journal is about to be deposited in a safe of my own invention. It consists of one of those army-surplus ammo cans that I used for gold cans, buried next to a well-worn path on our lot. One can get into the safe by digging down in the path; there is no vegetation there to be disturbed by digging, and any loose dirt will soon be trodden down into the path, so that the place will remain secret.